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ABSTRACT

The 1980s have witnessed a resurgence of interest in and demand for counseling services, particularly in the areas of mental health, family concerns, and adult agency counseling. Four critical issues brought up by that increased demand are: (1) computers in counseling; (2) students at risk; (3) pre-college guidance; and (4) career guidance. These are discussed in detail in this report. A review of research on the use of computer-assisted and computer-supported guidance shows the positive reactions of students and the ambivalent feelings of counselors. Three types of programs that have demonstrated effectiveness in dealing with at-risk pupils are discussed. Pre-college guidance is a short-changed area, despite the evidence that counseling interventions make a difference in who has access to college, who attends, and who stays in and does well. Areas in which guidance programs must be strengthened are discussed. The history of career development theory and practice, its roots and future are summarized. The major focuses of guidance and counseling in the near future are pinpointed. A list of references is attached. (PS)

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CURRENT ISSUES AND TRENDS IN GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

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The 1980s have witnessed a resurgence of interest in and demand for counseling services. In a wide variety of settings--schools, college, agencies, and business and industry--involving a range from precocious elementary children to reflective post-retirement adults, new programs and practices are being developed to respond to the diverse calls for counseling assistance. Growth in professional association size, one clear indicator of the vigor of a professional specialty, has demonstrated the increased involvement of its members in new areas of activity. In just the past year, the membership of the American Association for Counseling and Development increased by over 10%, bringing the total to approximately 50,000 members. Unlike earlier growth periods, the largest gains in membership were in those divisions related to mental health, family issues, and adult agency settings, rather than the traditional areas of schools and colleges. These trends in association growth resemble mosaics of bold and sometimes minute patterns that reveal the areas in which our society is seeking counselor assistance. An analysis of these areas can provide rare glimpses into the innermost hopes, aspirations, needs, and problems of our total population.

As counselors encounter needs for assistance, they face numerous challenges and issues--whether to respond and how, what priorities to give to their services, and how to sort out the important from the urgent. What methods they use and the decisions they make will reflect their central values and will initiate a response trajectory which will illuminate the paths that counselors will follow for the near future. Charting the new and emerging directions of counseling and the accompanying issues and dilemmas is not unlike the task of viewing a detailed road map of an unfamiliar location. The options may be so great and information about each one so sparse that a choice is difficult. With so many populations and settings to be served, counselors may easily lose their way in a jumble of turns, detours, and dead ends. The journey may be most rewarding if counselors seek out the superhighways of counseling practices and services--those central issues and topics which will most expeditiously lead to the principal cities of challenge and concern for all counselors today. This summary focuses on four of those critical issues: computers in counseling, students at risk, pre-college guidance, and career guidance.

Computers in Counseling

Counselors in many schools today question whether computers, on balance, are more likely to benefit or detract from counseling. Both the negatives and the positives are persuasively argued at the present. One of the most frequently mentioned "threats" is that computers will mechanize guidance and counseling and take away the warm, interactive process that characterizes

the work of a counselor with the student. A second area of concern is that of confidentiality. As computers can collect and store large amounts of data on students for long periods of time, there is considerable potential for abuse by unauthorized users. The third frequently expressed concern is that clients tend to interpret the objectivity of the computer as evidence that the information obtained from it is completely valid and reliable--that it need not be questioned or challenged. This can be a problem especially in computer-assisted testing, assessment, and information retrieval. A fourth, less openly expressed fear is that the computer will replace the counselor or, at the least, demean the counseling role by leaving only inconsequential tasks for the counselor to do.

While all of the threats have a basis in reality, they have shown themselves to be readily removed by appropriate safeguards, training for the staff, and orientation for student users. When safeguards are instituted, computers give clear evidence of the ability to enhance and extend the counselor's activities and outcomes. This can be accomplished through computer-assisted guidance and computer-supported guidance. Computer-assisted guidance may be defined as an interactive guidance technique in which a computer is used to present information, solicit and monitor responses, and select and present additional information in accordance with individual client needs. Computer-supported guidance may be defined as the use of a computer to maintain and analyze student data and to document and analyze the guidance program activities. Computer-supported guidance may also include administrative uses that are not directly related to the guidance process, e.g., recordkeeping and word processing, which increase the amount of time counselors have available for use with students.

Four frequently mentioned advantages of computer-managed guidance are uniformity, availability, the capacity to store and retrieve large amounts of information, and the possibility for direct student and computer interaction on topics of need and interest to the student. Most developers of computer-assisted guidance systems make no claims that computer-assisted guidance can replace the interaction between a student and a counselor, but rather say that it can increase the counselor's capability to work better and with a larger number of students through improved preparation of both the student and the counselor for their interaction.

Computer-assisted guidance research and evaluation studies have concentrated for the most part on examining clients' reactions to the experience and the impact of the system on the student's career decision-making process. A review of research on the use of these systems would warrant the following conclusions: (a) students react very positively to the experience of using them; (b) knowledge of self and the world of work is expanded; (c) students develop more specific career and educational plans; (d) students express greater confidence in their ability to make career decisions; and (e) students are more motivated to use additional career planning resources to assist them in making further decisions.

Caution needs to be exercised in interpreting these conclusions, however, as the research to date is limited and the different systems now available to counselors vary considerably in content and scope.

Counselors have expressed ambivalent feelings about the adoption and use of computers in counseling. They have been attracted by the computer's storage and retrieval capability and the resulting benefits for student decision making, but they have also been concerned about the consequences of using a costly tool about which there is limited knowledge and the potential for serious abuse. Overall, it would appear that a number of generalizations are appropriate regarding the use of computers in counseling.

1. Any use of computers should be based on a study of the individual school and its guidance program and a determination of the specific areas in which the computer could be helpful. General prescriptions about the desirability of using computers in counseling frequently are inappropriate and go awry in specific settings.

2. The adoption of computers is only the first step. More important than the initial decision and the actual introduction of computers is the selection of appropriate software. The usual procedure of selecting the computer first and the software second should be reversed--careful piloting and experimentation with software is the essential part of ensuring that computers will contribute to the guidance program.

3. Preparation of the counselors and other personnel who will be using the computers is an absolute essential. All too often the computers are obtained first, followed by a hurried, catch-up effort to provide the users with enough understanding and skill to "make the computers work." Counselor training should coincide with the acquisition of the computers, and counselors should be involved at all stages in the adoption and adaptation of their use in a particular guidance program.

4. Orientation of students and parents to the use of computers is extremely important. With ongoing orientation, students can develop appropriate expectations about computers and also acquire skills which will enable them to maximize the benefits from their use.

5. Constant evaluation and review of the outcomes of using computer-assisted and -supported guidance and counseling systems are absolutely essential. If installed and then left without staff involvement and/or monitoring, the systems will turn into window dressing with little real impact upon the students, or they will be used inappropriately and lead to misinformation or poor decisions by students.

Most of all, it appears that guidance and counseling programs are or should be in a stage of tryout and experimentation with the use of computer-assisted and computer-supported guidance. There are many options and opportunities, and the decision to adopt a particular system or software needs to be the result of studying priorities in a given guidance program and matching those priorities with the systems and software currently available.

Students at Risk

Nearly 2-1/2 million youths are at risk of being alienated from school, society, and work (College Entrance Examination Board, 1986; Schappi, 1985). Statistics tell part of the story:

- 5,000 to 6,000 teenagers commit suicide each year, and ten times that many attempt to do so. Because many attempts go unreported or are reported as accidents, the number may be as high as 500,000 per year (Peters, 1985b).

- One million teenagers become pregnant each year, and three-quarters of the pregnancies are unintended. While the overall teenage birthrate has declined, the out-of-wedlock birthrate continues to rise (Lachance, 1985b).

- Nearly 700,000 students drop out of school each year, and 300,000 become chronic truants. Among unwed teenage mothers, 13-24% leave school (College Entrance Examination Board, 1986; Schappi, 1985; Guttmacher Institute, 1981, in Lachance, 1985b).

- Three million youths aged 16-19 are looking for jobs and unable to find them, and 391,000 have quit looking (College Entrance Examination Board, 1986; Schappi, 1985).

- A 60-fold increase in juvenile arrests occurred between 1960 and 1980 (College Entrance Examination Board, 1986; Schappi, 1985).

- While the rate of alcohol and drug use among teenagers has gradually declined since 1980, usage levels remain high. An estimated 3.3 million teenagers are alcoholics, and 63% of all young people try an illicit drug before they finish high school (Johnston, O'Malley, & Bachman, 1984).

Youths at risk are not confined to a particular class or race, and in addition to the official statistics mentioned above, 10-15% of all 16- to 19-year-olds are estimated to be suffering from general alienation (College Entrance Examination Board, 1986; Schappi, 1985). How much of this is due to fundamental changes in the structure and status of the family is open to argument, but the rising numbers of dual wage-earner families, divorced parents, and single-parent or step families also constitute a phenomenon that cuts across socioeconomic strata. Again, the figures are troubling: estimates of children under 14 in regular self-care before or after school ("latchkey" children) are as high as 4 to 6 million (Frenza, 1984). Forty-one percent of children born into marriage will experience family disruption due to separation or divorce, and 46% of children entering a second family will go through a repeat disruption (Bundy & Gumaer, 1984)

As grim a picture as these statistics paint for the youth involved, the consequences for society at large will be devastating if their needs are neglected or ignored. Ironically, while the school reform movement has stimulated countless local and state initiatives to improve education, it may have exacerbated the problem. Such measures as lengthened school days,

more homework, and fewer electives often are mechanistic responses to a complex situation and may themselves contribute to student alienation. For students already able to cope only minimally, the stress on intellectual rigor and competitive academic performance may serve chiefly to ensure their failure.

Counseling services have thus become even more necessary for all students, but particularly for those at risk. Among the programs and interventions with demonstrated effectiveness are the following:

1. Because it is essential to get it right the first time, preventive services are of paramount importance. This means more and better early childhood programs, problem identification, monitoring of students' progress, and working with parents to provide crucial early support. With "latchkey" children, for example, successful interventions have included group and individual counseling in the school setting to deal with children's fears of being alone, survival skills training as part of the curriculum and in parent education programs, and quality before- and after-school care programs.

2. High school students are turning to counselors for suppor previously available from parents and other institutions, and at a time in their lives when the issues in education, life, and career decision-making are particularly salient. In addition to specific information and skills, counselors are at the front line in helping students assess and believe in their own potential, the single most important factor in maintaining motivation and persistence. Studies have concluded, for example, that it is not teacher mastery of content that makes the most difference for students, but the ability to inspire them.

3. For students in at-risk categories, targeted interventions become even more critical. Teens of divorce in single-parent families, for example, comprise a population where correlations exist with low grades, truancy and acting-out behavior, and where the dropout rate is double that of teens from two-parent homes. As many as one-third of children of divorce may also be dealing with the consequences of alcoholism in the family. Group counseling with these students has produced a number of solid gains, perhaps most importantly the sense that they have control over their own lives. The gains are reflected in better communication with parents and in increased self-esteem, which has led to substantial improvement in classroom behavior and academic performance.

School counselors have played a significant role in helping at-risk students, as well as parents, and the demand is rising as the numbers and needs increase. But the numbers of counselors are not keeping pace, partly because budget trimmers regard guidance and counseling as an unaffordable luxury and because advocates of academic excellence see it as tangential, if not irrelevant, to the learning process. The range of public opinion presents another hurdle, from resisting a perceived invasion of family privacy to expecting full psychosocial services.

If students at risk are to be helped to overcome their difficulties, it will require the interventions and special programs that guidance counselors can provide. Unless support for this assistance is forthcoming, large numbers of students will be denied the opportunity to achieve their potential as individuals and to contribute to society.

Pre-College Guidance

An issue of immense importance to current school guidance programs and to the design of future programs is whether and how pre-college guidance and counseling impacts on students. In a time of stringent financial demands and a desire for improved academic performance, the critical question is whether school guidance programs as we know them should continue and what, if any, changes or improvements should be made. The importance of this issue has come into sharp focus with the release of the report, "Keeping the Options Open" (1986) by the College Entrance Examination Board, a report based on an extensive study of the condition of pre-college guidance.

Underlying the discussion is the fact that the school reform movement has brought neither increased attention to nor support for guidance and counseling, with the result that counselors are expected to do too much for too many. Pre-college guidance is one of the areas that is short-changed, despite the evidence that counseling interventions make a difference in who has access to college, who attends, and who stays in and does well. Studies have demonstrated the significance of counseling services in motivating students to stay in school; assisting them to overcome negative expectations imposed by peers; helping them to break out of the straitjackets imposed by school tracking systems; sharing perceptions and understandings about students with administrators, teachers, and parents, which in turn enable them to be more effective in working with students; providing accurate and reliable information about careers, colleges, and after-school work opportunities to students who otherwise lack access to information; and helping students to manage transitions between different school levels.

What can be done to improve guidance and counseling services in schools has also been the subject of much analysis and research. Among the findings are the needs for improving program resources, reducing student-counselor ratios, clearly defining counselor job descriptions and responsibilities, reducing administrative chores, and setting clear priorities for guidance and counseling at different grade levels as a means to moderate the conflicting demands of teachers, parents, and students.

A particular problem area is access to counseling services, which has been found to vary considerably from district to district and from school to school. Unfortunately, the data would suggest that those students who could most benefit from the counselor's specialized skills and information (minority and low-income students) are the students least served by counseling. Another issue for many schools, although not always clearly stated, has been whether the resources now devoted to school guidance programs could be better used in direct improvements of instructional programs.

Clearly, there is a need for strengthening the school guidance programs in the following areas: (a) Provide greater preparation for counselors, both in inservice and preservice, in areas relating to career and educational planning and placement. Some counselors are highly knowledgeable and perform this function extremely well; others are inclined to see it as less important than personal counseling for a relatively small number of students.

(b) Make guidance an integral part of the curriculum so it can contribute to overall school goals, as well as accomplish specific guidance objectives. (c) Make sure that counselors, administrators, and teachers work together to more clearly identify the important functions of counselors, including a delineation of day-to-day responsibilities. (d) Increase the use of technology to improve the quality and range of assistance that counselors can provide to students from elementary through senior high school. (e) Collaborate more extensively with community agencies, teachers, and paraprofessionals to implement guidance functions, thus increasing the availability of services. (f) Develop linkages with business, industry, and government, both to establish goals and to provide resources for program delivery. The counselor and the school should actively seek out business and government leaders and work at extending the range and depth of these relationships.

In the view of one analyst, "If all students in our schools were served as well (by guidance) as those who are now the best served, there would be no problem" (College Entrance Examination Board, 1986). The task is clearly to identify how schools can effectively expand the use of those pre-college guidance interventions which lead to greater access to and equity in college attendance and improved academic performance at college. To accomplish this will require the redirection of both financial and human resources to ensure that educational reform includes the strengthening and improvement of guidance and counseling services.

Career Guidance

The first 45 years of career development theory and practice (referred to earlier as "vocational guidance") posited that the central role of the vocational guidance counselor was to assist clients in making occupational choices. The procedure used by vocational counselors was essentially three-fold: (a) determine the salient traits and abilities of a person through testing; (b) identify occupational opportunities through review of occupational literature and employment trends; and (c) assist the person to choose the occupation which best fits his/her characteristics--that is, the best match between what a given person was like and what was required of an individual in different occupations. This "test and tell" method was the method of choice for career guidance well into the 1950s. At this time a more comprehensive view of an individual's development became accepted. It was seen as occurring over the life span and involving a far broader array of essential concerns than just occupational choice. Since that time career guidance has split into the traditional choice-focused group of practitioners and a developmentally-oriented group that sees occupational choice as a developmental process. Through the use of the term "career development," these latter practitioners express their preference to view the development of an individual career-wise as "the total constellation of psychological, sociological, educational, physical, economic, and chance factors that combine to shape the career of any given individual" (National Vocational Career Guidance Association, 1973, p. 8). Limitations in funds and a desire for a practical and direct approach to providing assistance at critical junctures in a person's life (i.e., choice of an educational major or

applying for a job) sharpened the quiet debate over those who wanted to emphasize development over the life span and those who chose to see career guidance as helping people make the right choices. This disparity in what career guidance is and how it should be delivered has contributed to a major reexamination of career guidance and career development with a concomitant explosion in the writing and research devoted to it. The following major questions regarding the roots and future growth of career guidance have been explicit in the recent writing and reexamination:

1. Should the increased societal recognition of the importance of career development lead to more comprehensive and longitudinally-oriented career guidance programs?

2. What theoretical concepts regarding career development should drive the new programs?

3. What effect on career guidance will the changes in the occupational, social, educational, and economic climate have?

4. To what new populations and in what settings should career guidance be expanded?

5. What changes have occurred in the number, diversity, and quality of career guidance programs, tools, and techniques?

6. Is there a need for greater collaborative efforts among business, industry, community, and education to promote career development?

Since the early 1950s as many as ten major theoretical approaches have been discussed in the career development literature. In essence, these theoretical approaches have moved career guidance from an emphasis on a one-time occupational choice that was presumed to last an individual for a lifetime to a greater realization and incorporation of the totality of the individual and the need for a lifelong process of career decision making and planning. Most basically, the different theoretical approaches can be categorized by their emphasis on process, or the stages through which an individual moves during a lifetime of career development. The first approach gives major emphasis to these different stages, the means individuals use to resolve the challenges and questions of each stage, and the individual's life roles that are associated with the different stages. The second major approach emphasizes the content of career development, placing the primary emphasis on the characteristics of the individual and suggesting that the personal attributes of a given individual are predictive of what will bring satisfaction to him or her in a career choice. A few theorists have suggested that appropriate career development must combine both content and process and deal with how individuals grapple with both the developmental process which they will experience, the realities of their own personal world (intelligence, ability, values, interests, and so on) and the world about them, and the realities that the external world imposes upon an individual through his/her lifetime.

More recently, there has been growing cognizance of the need to integrate and synthesize the major concepts and theoretical approaches into a series of working generalizations which can be the basis for personal interventions by career specialists in working with persons desiring assistance in career planning and decision making. The following generalizations represent a succinct statement of an integrated theoretical perspective on career development. They suggest what should be the appropriate focus of a career specialist in planning and carrying out their career guidance interventions in providing assistance to individuals and groups.

1. Each individual can expect to experience a number of different occupations in his or her lifetime. Change in occupational focus and performance is the rule rather than the exception. An important determinant of any given person's satisfaction and success in his/her lifetime career is the ability to manage change, particularly as it applies to major life transitions.

2. Individuals who have recognized the importance of assuming personal responsibility for their life-career development and undertake a purposeful and systematic approach to exploring both their own personal selves in terms of abilities, interests, values, and needs, as well as the important determinants in the society about them, are more likely to experience satisfaction and rewards in their occupational and career life than those who see an occupation as primarily a function of chance and/or availability.

3. Individuals of the same socioeconomic group and with presumably similar educational and personal developmental experiences may vary greatly in terms of their vocational maturity and their ability to undertake responsible and effective career planning and decision making. High ability and desirable educational experiences are no guarantee that the individual has either the specific abilities needed or the understanding and motivation necessary to ensure effective career planning.

4. Essential to the career- and life-planning process is the need to understand the importance of systematic attention to and review of one's needs and opportunities throughout a lifetime and to be flexible and willing to change as a result of the ongoing review.

5. Individuals view their careers differently and demonstrate career-related behaviors at different times in their lives. A lack of interest or involvement in career-related behaviors is not a good predictor of what may occur at a later time. An individual's occupational choice and the desires for specific jobs are both influenced by and predictable from individual characteristics. Among the more important of these characteristics are intelligence, academic achievement, the possession of special skills and talents, the ability to respond, and the ability to relate to and interact with other people. Other important factors are individual needs, personal and life values, preferred life goals, and personality characteristics.

6. Factors external to a given person can play an important role in affecting that person's choice of an occupation and a specific job. Among the important factors are reinforcement received from significant others, the success of prior-related work experience, family structuring and influence, the specific condition of society at a moment in time, the opportunities for learning, and the access to and retrievability of relevant information.

7. Many individuals experience a process where they first engage in broad exploration, then move to a crystallization or greater focus of their interests. Personal satisfaction and occupational success in a given occupational field depend to a large extent on how well individuals are able to express their values and interests and to play roles that they see as appropriate for themselves.

8. Occupation is an important part of an individual's total life career. Within this career, occupation, family considerations, desired lifestyle, leisure, and personal values all play an important role and need to be considered in career planning and decision making.

9. Individuals need to be assisted not so much in finding a job or an occupational area, but rather in creating one which is consistent with both the individual's p personal needs and desires and the realities of the workplace and society in which the individual will function.

New Populations Served by Career Guidance

As career guidance comes of age, questions are increasingly being raised regarding what populations should receive major priority or emphasis in the delivery of career guidance. Traditionally, white males, particularly those of school and college age, have been the primary benefactors of organized and systematic efforts in the delivery of career guidance. The materials which were developed, such as tests and occupational information, all illustrate this bias towards use by and for white males. With a new emphasis in our society on equal opportunities for education and personal development for all, there has been an increasing recognition of the need to expand the base of those who receive the benefits of career guidance.

Certainly one of the groups that have led in the call for an expansion of the coverage of career guidance services as well as the development of non-biased career guidance materials has been women. Articulate spokes-persons for this group have identified the need for early exposure of young girls to non-traditional careers and the importance of making them aware of the fact that they will likely devote the majority of their adult life to a career, either in addition to or rather than home and family life. Especially, there has been a clearly identified need for role models of women who have entered and been successful in non-traditional occupational settings. In working with both girls and women, it has proved to be important to (a) help them understand their talents and the potentialities of those talents for a wide variety of careers, not just the more traditional ones; (b) realize the need for females, as well as males, to develop a

career awareness and sense of responsibility for developing their careers early and throughout their life; and (c) stress the importance of learning specific career decision-making and planning skills which will be used throughout life, particularly at critical career and life transition points. In offering career services for women, it is particularly important that there be adequate assessment to provide convincing evidence to the female client of her unacknowledged talents and skills and to assist her in the job search process, especially dealing with the difficulties and frustrations associated with finding a job in a market that has not traditionally been either open or hospitable to female applicants.

Much progress has been made in the design and the offering of programs for women, including a special modular series developed by the Women's Division of the Department of Labor. Much more needs to be done, however, if the present efforts are to be more than just window-dressing. Deeply felt attitudes and feelings, frequently reinforced by traditional family views and values, will negate much of the effort to expand women's career options unless the programs which are undertaken are comprehensive and extend over a period of time and are not just a one-shot effort.

As there has come to be an awareness of the need for more adequate career guidance services for women, so has there been an increasing need to recognize the importance of career guidance services for minorities, both those who are native-born Americans and those who are recent immigrants to this country. Of particular importance in tailoring career guidance services for these populations is the recognition of differences in values and belief structures of the minorities involved and, in many cases, the need to present materials in the appropriate language (e.g., Spanish). In some situations, the predominant Protestant work ethic may not exist to the same degree or evoke the same response among minorities as it does among Americans who have lived in this country for generations. What are relevant materials and approaches for the traditional American population may not work nearly as well for those newly introduced into American life.

Also of increasing importance is the need to provide career guidance services for the handicapped, services which are cognizant of the occupational implications of whatever handicap a given individual may have, both in the training plans and in the preparations for the job search. The handicap should be acknowledged and responded to in a way that maximizes the potential contributions and talents of each individual, rather than focusing on the negative aspects of a particular handicap. Counselor concern for the attitudes and feelings of the handicapped person is required in preparing the individual to cope adequately with those special adaptions needed to minimize interference which may occur in their work patterns as a result of their handicap.

Perhaps one of the most recent population groups to receive special attention in career guidance is that of older adults. Many individuals who have either voluntarily or involuntarily retired from a previous career find that retirement does not hold the psychological rewards that they expected it would or, out of financial necessity, find the need to return to the

workplace. For many of these older adults entering their second (or even third or fourth) major occupation, it is important that they have the opportunity for a full review of their past experiences and their needs and wants so that they may be represented in a new occupation. It is particularly important that they be helped to identify occupations and/or community services which build on their past experiences and also provide them with appropriate psychological and social rewards. For many older adults, career guidance services are not so much geared towards locating a specific job as they are toward helping each individual identify areas of profitable involvement where they can meaningfully contribute their time and effort.

New Career Guidance Programs, Tools, and Techniques

A number of new approaches to providing career guidance have emerged or have received new emphasis during the resurgence of career guidance. Among these are: (a) self-managed approaches to career guidance; (b) the use of networking to reinforce career guidance activities; (c) the use of group counseling to expand the numbers of people reached by career guidance; (d) the use of technology, particularly computers, to assist in career assessment as well as career planning and decision-making; (e) the use of system designs in which a variety of different elements are fused into one comprehensive program and (f) the development of collaborative efforts among business, industry, education, and the community in offering career guidance programs.

1. Self-managed approaches. A major focus in recent career guidance efforts has been the use of cognitive restructuring with career clients. Here the emphasis is on exploring how an individual views a given occupation and his/her ability to carry out or cope with different career development tasks and transitions. An individual's beliefs and presuppositions about careers and his/her ability to perform in them have a great effect both on how one responds to an occupation, and on what one decides regarding training or job seeking. In cognitive restructuring the individual is assisted in examining his/her beliefs and values and helped to overcome debilitating and erroneous beliefs and perceptions which interfere with their making of decisions and taking of actions for the best.

2. Networking. While an individual may gain much from interaction with a career counselor or career guidance service, the separation between when they are helped during the career counseling and when they take action on their decisions and plans can be great. Therefore, the establishment of networks of individuals with a common concern and interest in furthering their career development can provide useful emotional support and positive reinforcement of decisions and plans made during counseling sessions. Usually led by a trained career specialist, networking programs have proved to be both popular and effective in helping people to capitalize on the intellectual insights gained through counseling and to follow through to concrete actions and behaviors.

3. Group counseling. Group counseling used both by itself and in conjunction with computer-assisted career guidance programs has proved to

be a useful way to reach large numbers of people who are seeking ways to improve their career planning and decision making. The process of sharing one's career goals and actions with others can be helpful in reducing the sense of isolation and despair frequently experienced by people frustrated in their career planning. In addition it assists them in acquiring a variety of practical and useful career planning and decision-making skills.

4. Use of computers and technology. As discussed previously, a major development in the counseling field has been the use of computer-assisted career guidance programs which both complement and supplement the work of an individual or group counselor. These computer-assisted guidance programs, which are predominantly career-oriented, have been shown to be especially helpful to individuals in developing a greater career awareness, in considering a variety of different career options, and in making use of comprehensive and relevant occupational information in their planning and decision making. Because of the tremendous strides being made in computers and technology, it is likely that some of the greatest changes in how career services are offered will occur as a result of the greater utilization of computers and technology. Technology may best be thought of as a two-edged sword that can assist the counselor to do things easier and better (such as provide occupational information) or do things that counselors cannot now do (such as provide immediate feedback on assessment devices); or they can cut in a negative way in that they may overwhelm the individual's rational decision-making processes and encourage the client to give too much credence to the information provided by the computer.

5. Use of a systems design. Many of the career guidance programs currently located in schools, colleges, and agencies have "grown like Topsy." When a new program component or resource is added to the existing program, the program may grow disproportionately in some areas and wither in others. The career guidance systems approach has given emphasis to the development of carefully thought-through goals and the systematic analysis of how those goals may be achieved using a variety of resources, both human and machine. The systems approach has the advantage of matching the particular needs and interests of an individual with the available resources, giving particular attention to the learning style, situation, and need of each individual. By treating everyone as someone special, the counselor is able to maximize the individual's learning.

6. Collaboration among business, education, and the community. One of the most challenging new career guidance emphases is the emerging coalition among business, education, and community to offer meaningful career guidance programs for both youths and adults. The planning and actual operation of the career service involving the efforts of people representing these different sectors provides an unusually rich set of experiences both for the client seeking the career guidance service and for those who are offering it. These collaborative career guidance efforts are noteworthy for their ability to expand the vision of the individual experiencing them and to assist the individual in focusing on what are meaningful and realistic objectives for performance in the workplace. Through shadowing (following a particular person through his/her work for a period of time), internships, and planned work experiences, collaborative

efforts are offering rich experiences that result in better career choices, as well as increased motivation for the acquisition of competency in a chosen career area.

Images of a Zesty Future

A review of current trends and issues in guidance and counseling would be incomplete without reference to what the future will bring. Knowledge of the present is of particular use in determining what needs to be done and can be done to shape the future to meet our highest preferences. A series of images are presented which describe the major focuses that will characterize guidance and counseling in the near future. Hopefully, such discussion will focus action on what can be done to stimulate a flexible, productive future.

1. Integration of life and career development. There is an increasing understanding of the development of each individual's lifespan and the important transitions and challenges each individual will experience during his/her lifetime. At each of the major life transitions, significant teachable moments, and compelling decision points, people of all ages and all circumstances will increasingly seek and benefit from the intervention of counselors. At these times, developmentally-oriented counselors will assist them in developing life coping strategies that will better equip them to deal with the challenges and vagaries of life.

The major emphasis in life and career development integration will be the increasing recognition of career development and the importance of viewing the interrelationship among work, education, and leisure, and the need for all people to be constantly aware of and willing to prepare for the different roles that they will play at different stages of their lives. These roles will change with the age and circumstance of each individual, but they will have impact on the individual in varying degrees throughout each individual's lifetime.

2. Focus on wellness, rather than eliminating problems or overcoming disabilities. There will be an increasing recognition of the importance of dealing with the mind-body relationship and the need to consider the two in relationship with one another. Stress, personal vitality, creativity, even longevity, will increasingly be recognized as matters involving the mind-body interaction and will require counselors to respond to the totality of the individual, rather than the symptomatology of a problem or condition. Counselors will be challenged to expand their knowledge and to look for developmental orientations that help to build health and higher level living skills, rather than to respond solely to immediate problems or concerns.

3. Emphasis on self-directed development, rather than professionally delivered services. A number of the emerging trends and emphases (e.g., integration of life and career development, wellness orientation, technology, systems approaches) will contribute to and emphasize the importance of each individual's assuming responsibility for his or her own development.

Counselors will focus on providing individuals with the tools and the strategies that will enable them to continuously monitor their state of development and to be cognizant of the different self-help strategies and resources that they can use to help them deal with a particular challenge or transition.

4. Expanding use of computers and technology. We are only beginning to comprehend the enormous inroads that computers and technology are and will be making into all phases of our life. With advances in artificial intelligence and the prodigious achievements occurring in computer and technological hardware, the capabilities for offering a variety of services to people are growing exponentially. It would seem clear that the expansion in the capabilities of technology will facilitate some of the previously identified trends such as development over the life span and self-directed development. As great as the potential is for the impact of technology upon the learning of the user, there also are major implications for how counselors define and deliver their counseling in a time of rapid technological development. Technology clearly offers new avenues of assistance to clients in their learning and development. It also challenges the efficacy of many existing forms of delivery of assistance to clients.

5. Emergence of human resource systems as the norm rather than the exception. We have witnessed a slow but increasing growth in efforts to combine human and physical resources in the most judicious and expeditious way to assist individuals to achieve their significant goals. The use of systems methodology will offer clients a choice of the means by which they may acquire knowledge and skill to achieve an important goal or objective. This will be facilitated by the expansion of technology and an increasing emphasis on having specialists help clients direct their own learning and development efforts. Functioning as learning designers, counselors will assist individuals to define which admixture of physical resources combined with human intervention is most appropriate and effective for a person, given his/her own particular learning style. People's choices of what and how they learn will be greatly expanded and their need for counselor assistance will frequently take the form of consultation. Counselors will become developmental learning specialists who provide information on how clients, as persons with special needs and characteristics, can best acquire a particular skill and/or respond to a given need or interest of theirs. Disparate or isolated programs that are not part of a larger learning design are likely to receive scant attention and use.

6. Provision of assistance to larger groups of clients. Economic as well as psychological forces will work to increase the numbers of people who receive assistance at any given time. Either through larger physical groupings or through the use of electronic means to link people who are separated geographically, counselor contact and intervention will be less focused upon individuals and more upon clusters of individuals with shared interests and needs. In many cases, the individual interventions will take the form of validating self-assessments and planning and decision-making and looking for ways to improve upon or detect flaws in the strategies and plans developed by individual clients. Individual interaction between client and

professional specialists will be a precious commodity and those interactions will increasingly deal with client concerns which are least well met by other means.

7. More specialized strategies and resources for responding to people in need. With improved means of detection and an increasing desire to alleviate problems in learning and adjustment which would become magnified over a lifetime, more specialized resources and strategies for dealing with people in need or at risk will be developed. Building upon the available research and knowledge regarding what has and has not worked with similar people in the past, educational institutions and community agencies will have available a greater array of resources and intervention strategies that will enable them to respond and be helpful to people in need. Likely candidates for this increased developmental effort are poor student performers, those experiencing various forms of drug and alcohol abuse, and those persons who are the victims and/or potential victimizers of physical abuse. There will be an increasing desire to bring together the knowledge and resources available to provide counseling assistance to people in need earlier in their time of travail and to follow through to ensure that the assistance has been effective in bringing about change and improvement in behavior.

8. Major changes in the roles and responsibilities of counselors. Perhaps one of the greatest challenges of all will be the counselor's ability to understand and respond to the new challenges as well as the new opportunities that exist for them. In many cases they will need to make a major paradigm shift--not merely small changes in how they think or act about a problem, but radical changes in how they both think and act in response to changed societal conditions and the availability of new technologies. There will be a need for greater risk-taking and experimentation on the part of counselors; they will need to monitor their work as to what is effective and what is ineffective; and they will need to continually improve the quality of the services they provide for their clients. In the end counselors will either flourish or perish based not so much on available resources, but on whether and how counselors choose to adopt and use the new resources in how they think and respond to their user needs and interests.

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